

## Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 BEIRUT 09008 271640Z  
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 USIE-00  
INRE-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05  
PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 A-01 OPR-02 SY-05 OC-06  
CCO-00 SSM-03 IO-13 EB-07 DHA-02 OMB-01 SCA-01 MCT-01  
TRSE-00 COME-00 IGA-02 /106 W  
-----271649Z 001375 /44

O P 271528Z DEC 76  
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2605  
INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY 189  
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER  
USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM  
CINCUSNAVEUR, LONDON ENG  
CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER  
CIA WASHDC  
COMSIXTHFLT  
COMPHIBRON SIX  
COM THREE FOUR MAU  
CTF SIX ZERO  
CTF SIX ONE  
CTF SIX TWO  
CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO  
FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA  
FOSIF ROTA SPAIN  
DIA WASHDC  
CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER  
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 9008

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: MILI, PINS, PINT, LE  
SUBJECT: LEBANESE SITUATION DECEMBER 23-27

REF: BEIRUT 8972 (DTG 221452Z DEC 76)  
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PAGE 02 BEIRUT 09008 271640Z

1. SUMMARY: PARLIAMENT MET DEC 23-24, AND APPROVED COUNCIL OF  
MINISTERS AND REQUEST FOR EXTRAORDINARY POWERS FOR CABINET.  
NUMBER OF INCIDENTS DRAMATIZE CONTINUING INSECURE  
SITUATION IN BEIRUT AREA, INCLUDING FURTHER INTRA-PALESTINIAAN  
CLASHES, TWO KILLED AT AN NAHAR BUILDING IN HAMRA,

AND ASSASSINATIONS OF PFLP MEMBER AND HIS WIFE. ARTILLERY EXCHANGES BETWEEN RIGHTISTS AND PALESTINIAN/LEFTISTS KEEP TENSION HIGH IN SOUTH. PRESS REPORTS CONFLICTING RESULTS OF QUADRIPARTITE COMMITTEE MEETING ON ARMS COLLECTION, WITH ONE PAPER REPORTING NO DECISION AND OTHER SAYING AGREEMENT REACHED. FOUR OF EIGHT CABINET MINISTERS HAVE BEEN TRAVELING TO OTHER ARAB COUNTRIES. OTHER LEBANESE PERSONALITIES ON THE MOVE INCLUDE EDDE TO CAIRO AND EUROPE, AND JUNBLATT, WHO PLANNING EXTENSIVE TRIP ABROAD. ARAFAT MET WITH PRESIDENT ASAD IN DAMASCUS DEC 26. END SUMMARY.

2. PARLIAMENT CONFIRMS GOVERNMENT: GRANTS EXTRAORDINARY POWERS. PARLIAMENT CONVENED DEC 23 TO APPROVE NEW AL-HUSS GOVERNMENT AFTER PRESENTATION OF "MINISTERIAL STATEMENT." ALSO PRESENTED WAS BILL GIVING GOVERNMENT EXTRAORDINARY POWERS TO LEGISLATE BY DECREE IN NUMEROUS FIELDS FOR SIX MONTHS, INCLUDING RECONSTRUCTION, FINANCE, AND DEFENSE. BILL SPECIFICALLY LISTED NUMBER OF EXISTING LAWS WHICH CAN BE AMENDED BY GOVERNMENT DECREE, NOTABLY INCLUDING RENT LAW AND PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION LAW. ALL 72 DBZZGWR VOTED APPROVAL (SEPTTEL). TIGHT SECURITY AROUND MANSOUR PALACE WHERE PARLIAMENT MET. SESSION OF PARLIAMENT OFFICIALLY ENDS DEC 31, ALTHOUGH IT NOT EXPECTED TO MEET AGAIN BEFORE THAT TIME. UNDER EMERGENCY POWERS, PARLIAMENT CANNOT RECONVENE FOR SIX MONTHS EXCEPT AT REQUEST OF CABINET OR FOLLOWING PETITION BY AT LEAST TWENTY MEMBERS.

3. SECURITY SITUATION: INTRA-PALESTINIAN CLASHES. CLASHES CONTINUED DECEMBER 22-26 BETWEEN SAJQA AND REJECTION FRONT ELEMENTS IN PALESTINIAN AREAS OF CITY. DEC 22 SKIRMISHES  
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PAGE 03 BEIRUT 09008 271640Z

STARTED IN SHATILA AND SPREAD TO TARIQ AL-JADIDAH, SABRA, FAK-HANI, CORNICHE MAZRAA, AND HILU BARRACKS, ACCORDING TO AL CHARQ. PALESTINIAN COMMAND MET DEC 22 AND FORMED ORGANIZATION COMPOSED OF ALL ELEMENTS TO COMBAT SUCH DISTURBANCES. HOWEVER, AL HARQ REPORTED RENEWAL OF FIGHTING LATE DEC 23 DURING WHICH HEAVY EQUIPMENT USED. AL AMAL REPORTED CAMPS THERE DEC 24 AND ROADS TO PALESTINIAN AREAS REMAINED BLOCKED. ANWAR SAID MIXED PALESTINIAN DETERRENT FORCE STOPPED FIRE FIGHT WHICH ERUPTED IN SABRA DEC 27.

4. EXPLOSION AT AN NAHAR. ON DEC 23 YOUNG MAN CARRYING CHINESE-MADE ANTI-TANK GRANADE WAS KILLED AT ENTRANCE TO AN NAHAR BUILDING IN HAMRA AREA WHEN GRANADE EXPLODED KILLING HIM AND A SYRIAN SOLDIER. ASF TROOPS REINFORCED CHECKPOINTS AND INCREASED PATROLS AROUND CITY IMMEDIATELY AFTERWARDS, ACCORDING TO PRESS (SEPTTEL).

5. PFLP PERSONALITY ASSASSINATED. ON DEC 24, PFLP CENTRAL

COMMITTEE MEMBER ABDUL WAHHAB AL-TAYYIB AND HIS WIFE WERE ASSASSINATED IN BEIRUT. HIS WIFE, KHALDIYA ALI KHALID, WAS SISTER OF NOTORIOUS LADY PFLP TERRORIST LAYLA KHALID. MOTIVE FOR KILLINGS AND IDENTITIES OF ASSASSINS NOT DISCLOSED, BUT ALL PALESTINIAN GROUPS HAVE CONDEMNED ACTION.

6. SECURITY SITUATION: THE SOUTH. AL KIFAH AL ARABI REPORTED INCREASED TENSION IN BORDER AREA DEC 24 WHEN ISRAELI/ RIGHTIST ARTILLERY SHELLLED ARID, NABI IBL, SAF AL-HAWA, TALAT MASSUD AND TALAT LUBIA. PALESTINIANS/LEFTISTS RETURNED FIRE. EYEWITNESS ACCOUNT FROM LEBANESE MILITARY SOURCE STATES NABATIYAH WAS SHELLLED ON DEC 24-25 AFTER PLO INITIATED ARTILLERY FIRE FROM NABATIYAH ON ALQULAYAH. SOURCE ALSO STATED HEAVY FIGHTING ON DEC 25 IN VICINITY OF CHRISTIAN VILLAGE OF AL AYSHIYAH RESULTED IN APPROX 75 KILLED IN ACTION TOTAL FOR BOTH SIDES. ACCORDING TO AL CHARQ, ISRAELI MILITARY SPOKESMAN ACCUSED PALESTINIANS IN LEBANON AND JORDAN OF FIRING TWO KATYUSHA ROCKETS INTO ISRAELI TERRITORY. SPOKESMAN SAID CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 04 BEIRUT 09008 271640Z

ROCKETS, WHICH FELL NEAR YENEV ORE AND MAZRAIT, CAUSED NO DAMAGES/CASUALTIES.

7. HEAVY COLLECTION. RIGHTIST AND LEFTIST PAPERS PRESENT CONFLICTING REPORTS ON RESULTS OF QUADRIPARTITE COMMITTEE MEETING DEC 24. RIGHTIST AL ANWAR REPORTS MEETING, WHICH PRESIDED OVER BY SARKIS, WITH SYRIAN REP COL AL-KHOLY NOTABLY ABSENT, CONCLUDED WITHOUT STATEMENT ON ARMS COLLECTION. PAPER WENT ON TO SAY THAT MEETINGS OF COMMITTEE POSTPONED UNTIL BEGINNING OF NEW YEAR. LEFTIST AL KIFAH AL ARABI, HOWEVER, REPORTS THAT AGREEMENT REACHED AT DEC 24 MEETING AND THAT STATEMENT OUTLINING FORMULA TO BE ISSUED DEC 27. PAPER SUMMARIZED FINAL PALESTINIAN POSITION AS FOLLOWS: "THE RESISTANCE AGREED TO COLLECT HEAVY ARMS FROM CAMPS AND TOWNS, BUT WILL KEEP ITS HEAVY ARMS IN THE SOUTH. IT WILL NOT MAKE ANY CONCESSION ON THIS QUESTION..." AL KIFAH AL ARABI ALSO SAID THAT SYRIAN REP AL-KHOLY DECLARED HE WOULD NOT RETURN TO BEIRUT UNLESS THE QUADRIPARTITE COMMITTEE ADOPTED BEFORE THE END OF THE YEAR A RESOLUTION SPECIFYING A LIMITED TIME PERIOD DURING WHICH ARMS WOULD BE COLLECTED.

8. CABINET MINISTERS ON THE MOVE. FOUR OUT OF THE EIGHT NEW CABINET MINISTERS HAVE BEEN TRAVELING TO OTHER ARAB COUNTRIES: FOREIGN AND DEFENSE MINISTER BOUTROS RETURNED TO BEIRUT DEC 22 FROM DAMASCUS WHERE, ACCORDING TO AL CHARQ, HE DISCUSSED REBUILDING OF LEBANESE ARMY AND COLLECTION OF HEAVY ARMS WITH HIS COUNTERPART KHADDAM. AMIN BIZRI, MIN OF PUBLIC WORKS, TRANSPORT AND TOURISM DEPARTED BEIRUT DEC 25 FOR SAUDI

ARABIA, WHERE HE IS DISCUSSING RECONSTRUCTION NEEDS AS A FOLLOW-UP TO RECENT VISIT THERE BY PRIMIN AL-HUSS. INTERIOR MINISTER SALAH SALMAN IN DAMASCUS DEC 26 DISCUSSED PROCEDURES TO FACILITATE MOVEMENTS OF LEBANESE AND SYRIANS ACROSS MUTUAL BORDER, ACCORDING TO ANWAR. MEDIA REPORTED DEC 27 THAT PRIMIN AL-HUSS TO DEPART DEC 28 ON SECOND TOUR TO ARAB CAPITALS  
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 05 BEIRUT 09008 271640Z

IN EGYPT, LIBYA, AND IRAQ.

9. OTHER NOTABLES ON THE MOVE. RIGHTIST ANWAR SAYS RAYMOND EDDE ARRIVED IN CAIRO DEC 22 FOR A THREE-DAY VISIT, AFTER WHICH HE WOULD PROCEED TO ITALY AND FRANCE. KAMAL JUNBLATT PREPARING FOR LONG TRIP ABROAD TO INCLUDE CAIRO, PARIS, BRUSSELS, MOSCOW, AND INDIA. PAPER REPORTS HE WILL NOT RETURN "UNTIL NEXT SPRING." ARAFAT MET WITH PRESIDENT ASAD IN DAMASCUS DEC 26. PALESTINIAN NEWS AGENCY Wafa SAID ASAD ORDERED ISSUANCE OF COMMEMORATIVE STAMP TO HELP FAMILIES OF PALESTINIAN MARTYRS.  
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